



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
[Docket No. CP22-461-000]

Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC; Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Southside Reliability Enhancement Project, Request for Comments on Environmental Issues, and Schedule for Environmental Review

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the Southside Reliability Enhancement Project (Project) involving construction and operation of facilities by Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC (Transco) in Virginia and North Carolina. The Commission will use this EIS in its decision-making process to determine whether the Project is in the public convenience and necessity. The schedule for preparation of the EIS is discussed in the Schedule for Environmental Review section of this notice.

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process, the Commission takes into account concerns the public may have about proposals and the environmental impacts that could result whenever it considers the issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. This gathering of public input is referred to as “scoping.” By notice issued on December 15, 2021, in Docket No. PF22-1-000, the Commission opened a scoping period during Transco’s planning process for the Project and prior to filing a formal application with the Commission, a process referred to as “pre-filing.” Transco has now filed an application with the Commission, and staff intends to prepare an EIS that will address the concerns raised during the pre-filing scoping process and in response to this notice.

By this notice, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of issues to address in the environmental document, including comments on potential alternatives and impacts, and any relevant information, studies, or analyses of any kind concerning impacts affecting the quality of the human environment. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please submit your comments so that the Commission receives them in Washington, DC on or before 5:00pm Eastern Time on **August 24, 2022**. Comments may be submitted in written form. Further details on how to submit comments are provided in the Public Participation section of this notice.

As mentioned above, during the pre-filing process, the Commission opened a scoping period which expired on January 14, 2022; however, Commission staff continued to accept comments during the entire pre-filing process. Staff also held one virtual scoping session to take oral scoping comments. The session was held via teleconference on January 5, 2022. All substantive written and oral comments provided during pre-filing will be addressed in the EIS. Therefore, if you submitted comments on this Project to the Commission **during the pre-filing process** in Docket No. PF22-1-000 you **do not need** to file those comments again.

If you are a landowner receiving this notice, a pipeline company representative may contact you about the acquisition of an easement to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed facilities. The company would seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable easement agreement. You

are not required to enter into an agreement. However, if the Commission approves the Project, the Natural Gas Act conveys the right of eminent domain to the company. Therefore, if you and the company do not reach an easement agreement, the pipeline company could initiate condemnation proceedings in court. In such instances, compensation would be determined by a judge in accordance with state law. The Commission does not grant, exercise, or oversee the exercise of eminent domain authority. The courts have exclusive authority to handle eminent domain cases; the Commission has no jurisdiction over these matters.

Transco provided landowners with a fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled “An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know?” which addresses typically asked questions, including the use of eminent domain and how to participate in the Commission’s proceedings. This fact sheet along with other landowner topics of interest are available for viewing on the FERC website (www.ferc.gov) under the Natural Gas Questions or Landowner Topics link.

Public Participation

There are three methods you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has staff available to assist you at (866) 208-3676 or FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov. Please carefully follow these instructions so that your comments are properly recorded.

- 1) You can file your comments electronically using the eComment feature, which is located on the Commission’s website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to FERC Online. Using eComment is an easy method for submitting brief, text-only comments on a project;
- 2) You can file your comments electronically by using the eFiling feature, which is also located on the Commission’s website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to FERC Online. With eFiling, you can provide comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file with your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on “eRegister.” You will be asked to select the type of filing you are making; a comment on a particular project is considered a “Comment on a Filing”; or
- 3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the Commission. Be sure to reference the project docket number (CP22-461-000) on your letter. Submissions sent via the U.S. Postal Service must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Submissions sent via any other carrier must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

Additionally, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription. This service provides automatic notification of filings made to subscribed dockets, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. Go to <https://www.ferc.gov/ferc-online/overview> to register for eSubscription.

Summary of the Proposed Project, the Project Purpose and Need, and Expected Impacts

Transco proposes to construct and operate one new compressor station and modify two existing compressor stations and three existing meter stations in North Carolina and Virginia. The Project would provide 160,000 dekatherms per day (Dth/d) of incremental firm transportation capacity from Transco's Compressor Station 165 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia and 263,400 Dth/d from the Pine Needle liquified natural gas storage facility to delivery points in North Carolina. Transco's stated purpose of the additional capacity is to reduce supply constraints when natural gas demand is the highest, support overall reliability and diversification of energy infrastructure in the mid-Atlantic, and benefit the public by promoting competitive markets and increasing the security of natural gas supplies to major delivery points serving the mid-Atlantic.

The Project would consist of the following facilities:

- installation of a new compressor station (Compressor Station 168) which includes one new 33,000 horsepower electric motor-driven compressor unit, and installation of new mainline valves on South Virginia Lateral A-Line and B-Line at the new Compressor Station 168 in Mecklenburg County, Virginia;
- addition of one 16,000 horsepower electric motor-driven compressor unit at existing Compressor Station 166 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia;
- installation of piping modifications to allow for flow reversal at existing Compressor Station 155 in Davidson County, North Carolina;
- replacement of one meter run to increase delivery volumes at the existing Ahoskie Meter Station in Hertford County, North Carolina;
- installation of new facilities to increase delivery volumes at the existing Pleasant Hill Meter Station in Northampton County, North Carolina; and
- upgrade meter and controls and debottleneck piping at the existing Iredell Meter Station in Iredell County, North Carolina.

The general location of the proposed Project facilities is shown in appendix 1.¹

Based on the environmental information provided by Transco, construction and modification of the proposed facilities would disturb about 122 acres of land, which includes temporary construction workspace, permanent aboveground facility areas, and permanent access roads. Following construction, Transco would maintain about 119 acres for permanent operation of the Project's facilities; the remaining 3 acres would be restored and revert to former uses.

¹ The appendices referenced in this notice will not appear in the Federal Register. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail and are available at www.ferc.gov using the link called "eLibrary". For instructions on connecting to eLibrary, refer to the last page of this notice. At this time, the Commission has suspended access to the Commission's Public Reference Room due to the proclamation declaring a National Emergency concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), issued by the President on March 13, 2020. For assistance, contact FERC at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or call toll free, (886) 208-3676 or TTY (202) 502-8659.

Based on an initial review of Transco's proposal and public comments received during the pre-filing process, Commission staff have identified several expected impacts that will be addressed in the EIS. The Project would impact agricultural, pasture, forest, open, residential, and industrial land uses. Further, the EIS will describe impacts on environmental justice communities, federally and state-listed species, air quality, climate change, and connected actions/cumulative impacts. The Project would not directly impact any wetlands or waterbodies.

The NEPA Process and the EIS

The EIS issued by the Commission will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed Project under the relevant general resource areas:

- geology and soils;
- water resources and wetlands;
- vegetation and wildlife;
- threatened and endangered species;
- cultural resources;
- land use;
- air quality and noise;
- climate change;
- cumulative impacts; and
- reliability and safety.

Commission staff will also make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas. Your comments will help Commission staff focus its analysis on the issues that may have a significant effect on the human environment.

The EIS will present Commission staff's independent analysis of the issues. Staff will prepare a draft EIS which will be issued for public comment. Commission staff will consider all timely comments received during the comment period on the draft EIS and revise the document, as necessary, before issuing a final EIS. Any draft and final EIS will be available in electronic format in the public record through eLibrary² and the Commission's natural gas environmental documents webpage (<https://www.ferc.gov/industries-data/natural-gas/environment/environmental-documents>). If eSubscribed, you will receive instant email notification when the environmental document is issued.

Alternatives Under Consideration

The EIS will evaluate reasonable alternatives that are technically and economically feasible and meet the purpose and need for the proposed action.³ Alternatives currently under consideration include:

² For instructions on connecting to eLibrary, refer to the last page of this notice.

³ 40 CFR 1508.1(z)

- the no-action alternative, meaning the Project is not implemented;
- existing and proposed natural gas pipeline system alternatives; and
- alternative locations for new aboveground facilities.

With this notice, the Commission requests specific comments regarding any additional potential alternatives to the proposed action or segments of the proposed action. Please focus your comments on reasonable alternatives (including alternative facility sites) that meet the Project objectives, are technically and economically feasible, and avoid or lessen environmental impact.

Consultation Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's implementing regulations for section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Commission initiated section 106 consultation for the Project in the notice issued on December 15, 2021, with the applicable State Historic Preservation Office(s), and other government agencies, interested Indian tribes, and the public to solicit their views and concerns regarding the Project's potential effects on historic properties.⁴ This notice is a continuation of section 106 consultation for the Project. The Project EIS will document findings on the impacts on historic properties and summarize the status of consultations under section 106.

Schedule for Environmental Review

On June 7, 2022, the Commission issued its Notice of Application for the Project. Among other things, that notice alerted other agencies issuing federal authorizations of the requirement to complete all necessary reviews and to reach a final decision on the request for a federal authorization within 90 days of the date of issuance of the Commission staff's final EIS for the Project. This notice identifies the Commission staff's planned schedule for completion of the final EIS for the Project, which is based on an issuance of the draft EIS in October 2022.

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| Issuance of Notice of Availability of the final EIS | (February 24, 2023) |
| 90-day Federal Authorization Decision Deadline ⁵ | (May 25, 2023) |

If a schedule change becomes necessary for the final EIS, an additional notice will be provided so that the relevant agencies are kept informed of the Project's progress.

Permits and Authorizations

⁴ The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations are at Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 800. Those regulations define historic properties as any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

⁵ The Commission's deadline applies to the decisions of other federal agencies, and state agencies acting under federally delegated authority, that are responsible for federal authorizations, permits, and other approvals necessary for proposed projects under the Natural Gas Act. Per 18 CFR 157.22(a), the Commission's deadline for other agency's decisions applies unless a schedule is otherwise established by federal law.

The table below lists the anticipated permits and authorizations for the Project required under federal law. This list may not be all-inclusive and does not preclude any permit or authorization if it is not listed here. Agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise may formally cooperate in the preparation of the Commission's EIS and may adopt the EIS to satisfy its NEPA responsibilities related to this Project. Agencies that would like to request cooperating agency status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided under the Public Participation section of this notice.

| Agency | Permit |
|------------------------------------|---|
| FERC | Section 7 of the <i>Natural Gas Act</i> |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Section 7 of <i>Endangered Species Act</i> Consultation |
| State Historic Preservation Office | Section 106 of <i>National Historic Preservation Act</i> Consultation |

Environmental Mailing List

This notice is being sent to the Commission's current environmental mailing list for the Project which includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American Tribes; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers. This list also includes all affected landowners (as defined in the Commission's regulations) who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for Project purposes, or who own homes within certain distances of aboveground facilities, and anyone who submits comments on the Project and includes a mailing address with their comments. Commission staff will update the environmental mailing list as the analysis proceeds to ensure that Commission notices related to this environmental review are sent to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the proposed Project. State and local government representatives should notify their constituents of this proposed project and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

If you need to make changes to your name/address, or if you would like to remove your name from the mailing list, please complete one of the following steps:

- 1) Send an email to GasProjectAddressChange@ferc.gov stating your request. You must include the docket number CP22-461-000 in your request. If you are requesting a change to your address, please be sure to include your name and the correct address. If you are requesting to delete your address from the mailing list, please include your name and address as it appeared on this notice. This e-mail address is unable to accept comments.**

OR

- 2) Return the attached "Mailing List Update Form" (appendix 2).**

Additional Information

Additional information about the Project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at **(866) 208-FERC**, or on the FERC website at www.ferc.gov using the eLibrary link. Click on the eLibrary link, click on "General Search" and enter the docket number in the "Docket Number" field (i.e., CP22-461-000). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or (866) 208-3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of all formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

Public sessions or site visits will be posted on the Commission's calendar located at <https://www.ferc.gov/news-events/events> along with other related information.

Dated: July 25, 2022.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

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